

Communion sampler by Graham Carslake.

The dropped token.

The leader holds out a silver tray or plate, pauses , and then drops a 20cent coin on it.

A dropped token. This is a story from one of our pioneers for us to hear today.

Nearly 200 years ago a young Irishman, Alexander Campbell faced a life defining decision. Could he in all conscience accept the customs of his Old light Anti-burgher Seceder Presbyterian church? In a defiant act of conviction as an 19 year old, he dropped the token and walked away never again to partake of communion with his home church.

It was like this. Twice a year the Presbyterian church in Scotland met for communion. There was a strict procedure to follow. Every person who desired to have communion was visited by the leaders, were questioned about their faith and their life, and on that basis were accepted or were rejected as worthy to attend. If passed, they were given a silver token to then take with them on the occasion as this signified that they were worthy to be there.

Could you imagine that as a required practise in this our church here today? Would you pass?

This practise jarred the spirit of Alexander Campbell when he saw people branded as unworthy and unclean and excluded from the communion time. His struggle climaxed in a defiant conviction that this was against the spirit of Jesus and his communion time with the disciples. He came up to the table, dropped the token and walked away never to take communion again at his mother church.

Today we come at the invitation of Jesus Christ, He welcomes us and accepts us as we are, "sinners saved by grace". I do not have to pass the judgements of others, I am welcomed and loved by Jesus. Churches of Christ have always been identified as People of the open table.

The bread that we eat reminds us that His love gives us eternal life and always satisfies.

The cup as we drink it reminds us of that His death on the cross was freely given for you and for me. It was a love gift for us and now "We love because He first loved us".

This is the Lord's table and He invites you to share it today with His family of faithful believers.